



**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**  
**AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**Recommendation Number: 20230606-11:**  
**Support African American Youth Harvest Foundation Emergency Funding**

**WHEREAS**, the African American Resource Advisory Commission (the "Commission") is authorized by Austin City Code § 2-1-521 to advise the city council on issues related to the quality of life for the City's African American community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission is specifically authorized to recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront African Americans in the areas of education and employment, among other areas; and

**WHEREAS**, data from the Community Advancement Network indicates that areas in the northern, southern, and eastern parts of the City of Austin have high labor participation rates, but also a high proportion of low-income residents, suggesting that community members are working hard yet earning low wages; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2021 Ready Nation report by a Council for a Strong Nation, highlighted by Austin's African American Leadership Institute, asserts that annual losses due to lack of childcare at the national level equate to \$57 billion; employers lose \$12.7 billion in productivity due to childcare issues; and 86% of primary caregivers lament the negative impact of childcare issues on their contributions to work; and

**WHEREAS**, a 2020 Early Childhood Expansion report conducted by the African American Youth Harvest Foundation with support from the St. David's Foundation ([www.aayhf.org/reports](http://www.aayhf.org/reports)) included first-hand data collected from over 300 community members across Travis County – 78% of which had household income under the Federal Poverty Level – where caregivers indicated that childcare affordability represents the

highest stress factor impacting their mental health, causing significant to severe stress for over 53% of respondents, followed closely by utilities, housing and childcare quality; and

**WHEREAS**, only one in eight children who qualify for free or reduced-price meals access them in the summer months, often leading to hunger or unhealthy choices, and analyses by Children’s Optimal Health have found high concentrations of obese youth in north-central Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, the highest population concentrations of African Americans in Austin occur in central zip codes 78702, 78721, 78722, 78723, 78724, 78725, and surrounding areas to the north and south throughout the eastern corridor of Travis County, and these areas and included populations are characterized by disproportionately low income rates and low educational outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, summer educational and enrichment programs can meet childcare needs for working parents, if affordable; and

**WHEREAS**, the summer “opportunity gap” contributes to gaps in achievement that persist and widen over time, particularly for low-income students, and research by the National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment has demonstrated that summer learning loss in a child’s early years accounts for at least half of the 9th grade reading achievement gap, where as little as 2-3 hours per week in high quality summer programs can offset the negative effects of summer learning loss and accelerate learning; and

**WHEREAS**, a 2022 CNN Business report cited the rising cost of summer camps for one child as ranging from \$400 per week (\$2,400 for six weeks) to \$4,850 for two weeks (\$14,550 for six weeks), and the cost of the African American Youth Harvest Foundation’s six-week Urban University Summer Camp is significantly lower at approximately \$220 per week (\$1,320 for six weeks) in costs for one child, yet provides this service at virtually no cost to families;

**WHEREAS**, the African American Youth Harvest Foundation has a proven track record

of implementing effective six-week summer programs that engage dozens of businesses, volunteers, community partners, systemic agencies, and faith-based organizations, as strategies to improve educational performance measures and quality of life among African Americans and other community members in need, yet recently had an unexpected surge in enrollment resulting in a waitlist of over 150 children and youth; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes the need for accessible prevention and intervention services to eradicate disparities in quality of life between African Americans and other demographic groups;

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COMMISSION HEREBY RECOMMENDS AS FOLLOWS:**

That the City Council of the City of Austin support the African American Youth Harvest Foundation’s 2023 Urban University Summer Camp, a six-week, high impact summer program to prevent summer learning loss and equip youth with the intellectual, social and creative resources necessary for academic, career and life success while meeting the needs of working parents and adult caregivers, which shall be conducted at the Huston-Tillotson University campus at 900 Chicon Street, Austin, TX 78702 (prime strategic placement within heavily concentrated African American and low-income communities).

**FURTHERMORE THE COMMISSION HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

Provide \$200,000 in immediate emergency funding to the African American Youth Harvest Foundation (AAYHF) to support the additional capacity needed (e.g., staff, food, facilities, supplies, etc.) to accommodate the unexpectedly high enrollment and critical need for the Urban University Summer Camp, to be implemented at the aforementioned location and to include the following:

- daily free breakfast, lunch, and healthy snacks, as well as food packs for participants to take home for the weekend;
- a safe, wholesome space for children and youth to connect with peers and adults in a positive environment that builds social-emotional aptitude;
- the ability for parents to work or pursue advanced work opportunities or training, with the peace of mind that their children are in a quality childcare setting with caring, culturally competent staff;
- connection between camp participants and an array of community supporters who will deliver presentations and curricula on a comprehensive variety of topics such as academic success, financial literacy, mental and physical health and wellness, career exposure, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) skills and competencies, and educational field trips, constituting over 270 direct program hours per child; and
- connection to a full continuum of wraparound supports for families by over 20 African American led service providers through AAYHF's Youth Resource Center.

I affirm that this Resolution was approved by majority vote of the African American Resource Advisory Commission at a Regular Meeting on June 6, 2023.

Signed by:

**Linda Hayes**

Linda Hayes

Staff Liaison

Date of Approval: June 6, 2023

Record of the vote: (Unanimous on a 13-0 vote, 1 Absent, 2 vacant)